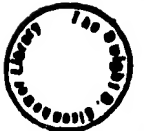


SECRET
April 24, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
April 23, 1959 - 3:30

Others present: Secretary Herter, Mr. Dillon, Mr.
Merchant, General Goodpaster

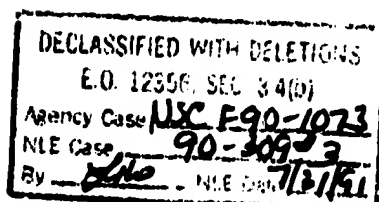


The President, referring to the session earlier in the day on contingency planning for access to Berlin, asked that thorough studies be prepared along the lines of the papers presented, but that this be followed by a presentation of the gist of the matter for discussion, out of which should then evolve a very short paper of "directive type." It is not too helpful to have long, analytical papers with conclusions scattered through them. In many cases, the use of charts and graphs is helpful. Mr. Herter agreed that where graphs could be used he would try to see that this is done.

Mr. Herter then reported that he is leaving Monday evening, the 27th, for the 4-power working meeting of the Western Foreign Ministers in Paris. He said that the working group which has been meeting still has a number of unsolved issues before it. He said he would like to come in again and see the President on Monday just prior to departing. A discussion of some of the issues still open then followed.

Disarmament is the second issue.

The President asked whether we have a well-developed proposal for an inspection system for a disarmament agreement. Mr. Herter indicated that General Norstad has drawn up a good plan for this.



The next issue is really a question -- as to what we should try to do concerning assurances against surprise attack. The President said that here his thinking is that any agreement that both sides can check on with confidence is all to the good, even though the scope of the agreement is very limited.

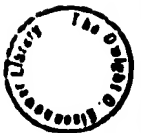
The next issue pertains to a possible role for the U N.

Hammarskjold, however, thinks that at some stage the conferees may want the United Nations to help in a solution. He pointed out that the United Nations has never had experience in supervising elections. They might be able to take on some task which is simple and definitive such as taking over the posts on the access routes from the Soviets. Mr. Herter said there is also some reason to think that holding a summit conference through the U N machinery may be helpful. The President commented, however, that although there might be some tie to the United Nations, on any question where we are hoping to get real agreement the fewer participants the better. For the summit meeting, he thought the attendance must be held down to the top four countries. The Security Council is too large and has too many extraneous interests.

The next issue is on tactics, and specifically whether there should be publicity in advance of the May 11th meeting concerning the Western "package" position, perhaps three or four days ahead of the meeting. The President said there is one danger in this -- which is the danger of revealing your hold card in a poker game in advance of the play. He recognized that there are reasons on the other side -- to carry world opinion -- and thought that it would be good to put out a persuasive document stating our purposes and principles, and giving just a hint of the specifics. He thought we should not, however, be appearing

to enter the negotiations on a "this or else" basis. Mr. Herter commented that we would be putting our statement out as the main elements of our initial position. Mr. Dillon suggested that this material could very well be put out in a speech by the Secretary on his return from the meeting on the 29th. He would be in position to speak rather freely -- without the necessity of getting allied agreement on the text.

The next issue pertains to our plan for Berlin. The representatives of all four countries had agreed upon a unified Berlin with free elections, but the British and French are now indicating that they favor the status quo. The President said we are reaching the point where it becomes quite important to know what the Berliners really want. Mr. Merchant commented that the only thing that keeps the Berliners resolute is the presence of Western forces there. The President commented that it would be foolish to try to settle the Berlin issue by itself. We must seek an over-all German solution in which Berlin becomes simply an element. Mr. Herter confirmed that this is our stand, and we will seek to keep these linked.



The last issue raised is whether we should put forward the text of a peace treaty or just the principles for a peace treaty. Mr. Herter commented that our allies are showing some signs now of not wanting to put forward even the principles of the treaty, but he thought it was necessary to have something concrete to show our seriousness of purpose.

In commenting on the prospects for the 4-power meeting next week, Mr. Merchant said he thought we will come out with a less imaginative plan than we had hoped for, but even so, a very solid and constructive one. The President asked that the group be trying to think of some feature that would be new and striking. He mentioned as examples his "Open Skies" proposal at Geneva, and his idea of inviting 10,000 Russian youths to come to the United States for a year of schooling.

The President also suggested dividing up the various topics, and assigning several to the individual Western leaders. For example, have Macmillan speak for the West on some particular points, etc.

Mr. Herter next raised the point of possible Congressional attendance at the Foreign Ministers conference on May 11th. He said that

Senator Fulbright is opposed to this, as he is. The President strongly agreed that it is better to avoid this, particularly inasmuch as the meeting is not engaged in drafting a treaty that would subsequently have to go to the Senate.

The President recalled that Khrushchev has said that he would be glad to go to Vienna or San Francisco. He reiterated that if the meetings were to drag out, he would have to drop out occasionally in order to keep up with the Executive work, in which case he would bring in Mr. Nixon to spell him.

Mr. Herter said he thought he would like to have Mr. McElroy, Ambassador Thompson and Mr. Merchant attend the Foreign Ministers conference with him. It might be best for Mr. McElroy to come in after the initial meetings had been held. He indicated he was contemplating that the meetings might run for something like three weeks in duration.



A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA



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